THE SUMMER ART SCHOOL

George B. Bridgman Discusses an Art Teacher's Trials and Tribulations

"Do you say 'plawster cast' or 'plaster cawst?'"

It is by hearing art talk of this kind that you know you are approaching the summer school of the Art Students' League. It is the first day, and with numbers few, though undismayed, the students are working busily in the life class. Kneeling on the platform, one of the students, in the garb of a sister of charity, takes the place of a professional model, while the rest work at easels and boards.

The regular summer school of the league is at Lyme, Conn., under the direction of Frank Vincent Du Mond and Will Howe Foote. Old Lyme is well known to the frequenters of winter art exhibitions, for every year shows its availability in the matter of huge ledges of rock, oak trees, marshlands, wooden bridges, cattle—in fact all the natural properties which delight the soul of the artist.

Yet there are many left-over students for the indoor work at the league. These include usually some who are behindhand in the work; some who are beginning and desirous to obtain a foothold before the winter term begins, and some others who unconsciously emphasize the saying that art is long. To them it has been perhaps a matter of ten or fifteen years, and they are still working away where they started, patiently, lovingly, caring less for the result than for the process.

There is a scholarship offered in the summer school, and the pupil who obtains it enters the winter class clear of expense. Besides this the summer school offers the advantage to the student in hot weather of pleasant, cool, airy rooms to work in. There are pleasant sitting and reception rooms, and a luncheon room where the students may bring their basket lunches and eat and talk art jargon to their heart's content without being withered by opprobious epithets and sarcastic glances, something which is likely to happen in the outer world when two "ash cats," as in France they term the lean, hungry impressionists, get together and discuss values.

You may stand at the door of the schoolroom and glance in, but your appearance causes no comment. Every one of the summer students, in spite of the heat, in spite of the hot looking blouses and aprons, is absorbed with his special medium of expression, be that medium crayon, water color, oil or pastel.

The instructor, too, pays no heed to the outer world, the open door and the curious onlookers. From easel to easel he passes and courteously calls attention to defects in drawing, coloring or other technicality.

Sometimes a couple of students leave their own work and follow him about. When they return, there is considerable rubbing out or whatever the process is that an art student employs when disgust has replaced satisfaction.

"We learn more from each other," said one of the students, "than in any other way. We give each other criticisms; and if the instructor praises any one's work, we immediately note the difference. Class work is very helpful to the student; and on the days the instructor isn't here, we don't waste much flattery on each other's sketches."

Promptly at 1 o'clock there is a clearing out of the room. The instructor of the summer school, George B. Bridgman, leads the procession. It is just as he is disappearing through the door that he is caught and brought back to answer questions.

"This is my first morning in this particular school, although I have taught summer schools for years, and I guess there is very little that I don't know about them," he says.

If one of the art students could put as much expression in the face of a portrait as there is in Mr. Bridgman's when the words "summer school" are inadvertently spoken, fame and fortune would await his steps.

"You don't look as if the remembrance of your experiences was a particularly pleasant one," remarked the visitor.

Mr. Bridgman laughed heartily.

"Well, I should say not! I haven't many illusions left regarding the joys of that special kind of work. I suppose, when you look at the matter with your mind tempered to a specially rosy tint, the lot of the teacher who takes a summer class of art students must seem one glad sweet song.

"Well, it isn't. I know what I'm talking about.

"I have taken classes all over, my largest ones to Quebec and Europe. This year I am trying the indoor class for a change.

"When I went to Quebec I had a class of fifty-eight. Of course, the first thing you do is to see that they get settled in the boarding houses all right, and then you go and look up a place for them to begin their work.

"That is a task that falls to your lot every day, for if you didn't look ahead and pick out your spot, when it came time to give your instruction you would find your class of pupils scattered all over about fifteen miles of country, and on you would devolve the pleasing duty of rounding them up. By that time you would wish them all further."

"What is the hardest problem to face when you start out with a class?"

"Enthusiasm. The amateur art student is nothing if not enthusiastic. This is especially true of the summer scholars.

"As soon as they get out of doors there are incipient Millets all over the place. Details of coming 'Angeluses' are discussed vividly. You are asked to express your opinion whether the Rosa Bonheur methods or those of—well, say, Meissonier, will find readier market.

"You give your opinion on the subject. If you are very good natured you don't laugh.

"When your pupils are all settled in their boarding places you inform them that they are to meet at a certain place at 8 o'clock. You have chosen a spot where there are some mountains or hills, valleys, perhaps a hay rick or two in the foreground, and a river may meander slowly through.

"You set them to work. What happens? The enthusiasm is still rife. They paint and paint and paint.

"When the day is over, you find that they have painted everything in that landscape from the place where they sit as far as the horizon, and way beyond that. There are trees and hills and lakes and patches of woodland and sheep grazing and peasants working and birds singing that you—meaning the teacher—can't see at all.

"But they are all in the picture. Nothing has escaped the eagle eye and the ardor of the amateur student. The more they get in, the better satisfied they are.

"If they can paint about five miles beyond the point where vision extends, they go to bed happy and dream how they will spend the fortunes awaiting them.

"This is especially true of the first days. As time goes on work gets harder and energy dies its natural death, and they begin to weed out a little of their superabundant sightseeing.

"When the season is over, there is a great difference in the point of view. Usually the student who has begun by painting a Sabbath's day journey beyond the horizon line on a small canvas ends by painting a branch of a tree with four leaves on it and thinks he has done well to accomplish that in the time allotted.

"Then in the first days nothing seems to be able to tire the students. They will start work at 8 o'clock in the morning, stop for lunch and keep on until sunset. Then they go home. At dinner some one will say:

"'Do you know, I'm not a bit tired. I believe I'll get up to-morrow morning and paint a sunrise.'

"Before the evening is over about half the class have decided to rise early and immortalize the sun. That means that the teacher gets up too to furnish sunrise suggestions. Any teacher would love that, particularly one who had worn out his own youthful enthusiasm and wanted to sleep.

"As soon as the other half of the class learns that the sunrise has been a success they determine to go one better and paint a moonlight scene. The moon probably does not rise until about ten or eleven, but that makes no difference.

"The teacher accordingly takes the rest of the class for a moonlight scene and gets up the next morning to start the class anew on the regular landscape work.

"Well, this lasts for a while, and then suddenly enthusiasm wanes; it has been too ardent and has burned itself out. It is hot, or it isn't hot enough, or discouragement sets in, and there is a new phase to be combated.

"You begin by starting quarrels among them. You ignore one girl's work and you praise another. You tell one under pledge of secrecy that sunrises are her forte, and try the moonlight racket with another.

"You forget to criticise some and you overcriticise others. By and by there is a regular hornet's nest. Under the spur of indignation and disgust they work with increased ardor, and by judicially engineering this game you keep them up to the standard required."

Mr. Bridgman wiped his forehead.

"But it's hard work. When I took a class to Holland, I think, I had an even worse time.

"In Europe, particularly in countries where the English language is not spoken, your duties are a cross between those of a personally conducted guide and a jack-of-all-trades. It is seldom that the art student knows any foreign language. Painting masterpieces is apt to absorb all other ambitions.

"So, when they get lost—and of course they are always getting lost—it is your pleasing duty to hunt them up, put police officers on their track and do a little detective work in your spare moments.

"Then, for some unknown reason, every art student, if of the sex that travels with big trunks, always takes one of the trunks belonging to a member of the family whose initials are entirely different from her own, preferably those of a married sister. When she loses the trunk—of course she loses it—as all her materials are in it, nothing can be done until it is found.

"It is necessary then to explain to an army of officials why those initials do not match her name. As this explanation has to be made in Dutch, of course it adds to the joy of the occasion.

"No, there is little fun in the summer school from the perspective of the teacher.

"Perhaps one reason why more students prefer to study here in the indoor summer schools is that at present nearly every one of the pupils wants to take up illustrating—work in black and white. The demand for good work of this kind by the newspapers and the magazines of course establishes the market. Art, like everything else, follows the trend of the public taste.

"The pupil who wants to paint landscapes and portraits and yet knows that he is dependent on his own efforts for his livelihood soon learns that his success in those fields is very problematical; while, if he can make a good illustrator, his work will bring a good price. So the demand at present is to be taught illustrating.

"What form of illustrating is best paid? If you can call it illustrating, I suppose there is no question that it is the cartoon or caricature.

"It is not taught here. The nearest approach we make is in the fake exhibit, which is entirely in the hands of the pupils. Some of it shows a marked tendency in that direction, and last winter a prize was offered for the best fake; but as soon as the mercantile element entered in the inspiration of the students seemed to become paralyzed. That often happens with the young pupil. He gets over it after a while. Then he can't work unless there is a mercantile element largely developed.

"The cartoonist need not necessarily be an artist. In fact, many of them are not, although on the other hand many are good workmen in technique. It is no uncommon thing for a cartoonist to get $10,000 a year for his work, while the illustrator, perhaps greatly his superior in artistic equipment, may be paid much lower rates.

"Why is it? Presumably because the cartoon is really not an expression of art and should not be so classified. It is really the expression of the political tendency of the paper and is a signpost of its policy. The cartoonist often does not even develop his own ideas, but has them suggested to him and merely employs a facile pen in putting them into shape.

"Generally speaking, the managers of the art schools do not look on newspaper illustrating with favor. Perhaps they think its ephemeral nature detracts from its dignity. I do not know. But there is doubt that the demand of the art student now is for work that will lead him directly into the illustrating field. He is willing to sacrifice a future for a probable present, and the condition of art to-day in America does not offer much to ambition or to the creative powers.

"Even the summer school is affected by this general attitude toward art, although the link may seem frail.

"Look into hisory and you will see what I mean. In the time of the Greeks and Romans art followed the demand for it by portraying the gods in enduring material. It was then that sculpture reached its climax, because the artist was assisted in the consummation of his work by the public treasury.

"In later and Christian times, when it was desired to portray the saints in less muscular appearance, marble was replaced by painting under the guidance of the Church and assisted by it. To-day in France the Government stands ready to assist artists, and even in England the portrait painter has a chance, for people are so devoted to their ancestors, and so in the habit of having their portraits painted and repainted and establishing an ancestral gallery with their own features, that a man who has devoted his life to that form of art need not starve.

"Here it is quite different. There are two classes of people who buy pictures in America. There are the millionaires in the first place.

"As a general thing they want a small canvas, perhaps a quarter of a yard square, which is painted by a world-famed artist and of which they are assured there is absolutely no duplicate anywhere nor ever will be. For such a chef d'œuvre they are willing to pay almost any price.

"But when you look at the matter from the point of view of the art student, it is rather a serious thing; certainly he can hope for little patronage from that class.

"Then there is the class represented by lawyers, doctors, business men, who have made a small success in life and have some slight knowledge of art, but whose appreciation is not unmixed with the commercial spirit. At the most they are not willing to pay more than $40 or $50 for a painting; and then they are only willing to buy it from an artist who has shown undeniable marks of ability, so that in the future the picture for which they have expended $50 will be like bread cast upon the water, and they will be able to put it on the market again and get $5,000 for it. Neither is that spirit conducive to the creative art.

"So there is little left to the art student but to choose the path where certain results will follow, and these certain results to-day point to the illustrative field only; and just as the market controls the schools, so, in turn, the pupils of those schools control the teachers, and though they may wish to enter broader fields, they cannot. The commercial spirit rules.

"Do I think men or women better pupils? The average woman art student is superior to the man. It is the woman who displays unflagging industry.

"When she enters the antique class, for example, she will not be content until she has faithfully portrayed the nail and the string on which the plaster cast may be hung. You have seen a portrait where every eyelash was accurately reproduced, and you have known people to stand in front of that picture and say 'How lifelike that is!' The woman art student begins that way and works onward from that starter.

"But it stops there. When you come to the selected few, the men far outstrip the women. The picked ones are all of the masculine sex. Why, I don't know.

"Take a class of twenty. Nine women may exceed nine men, but the extra two, the two that are so far ahead that the rest are out of hailing distance, will invariably be men. It is these two who go on and succeed and the world hears of them. The other men do hack work or give up art.

"I don't know what becomes of the women; I often wish I did. Perhaps they marry and use their art training to beautify their homes, and that is not a bad ending for it, after all."

IN QUEST OF A SUNRISE.

MR. BRIDGMAN CRITICISING.

AN INDOOR SCHOOL, DRAWING FROM THE ANTIQUE.

THE ART STUDENT OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL.

THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH

RECENT PHASES OF AN IDEA PURELY AMERICAN

"Bowling alleys and billiard rooms, dancing classes and tailor shops! Queer things to be found under church roofs," said Dr. W. H. Tolman, director of the American Institute of Social Service.

Dr. Tolman was helping to box the photographic collection which the institute was sending to St. Louis to illustrate the progress of social betterment.

"We are sending along pictures of the work of institutional churches," said he, "because it will be totally new to the foreigners. The institutional church is an American invention.

"It is not known on the other side, even in a rudimentary form. It is an illustration of the most salient quality of American genius—adaptability.

"We have a new church nowadays, just as we have a new education and a new woman; and they all come from the American expertness at adapting oneself to changed conditions.

"The old time conventional church seemed to exist wholly or principally for the purpose of offering the public opportunities for worship at stated times. Its practical work was generally for the direct purpose of adding to its own membership or raising money for its own expenses. Its benevolences were for the most part to multiply churches of its own denomination in this or foreign countries, and its charities were incidental.

"Two hundred thousand new people moving into New York below Fourteenth street and seventeen Protestant churches moving out of the same neighborhood during the same period shows that the old time church failed at a certain point to meet the needs of a changing population. An institutional church in the same neighborhood will be jammed to the doors.

"The institutional church goes into such a quarter and finds that the people living around it have no opportunity in their own homes to take a bath. It furnishes bathing facilities.

"It finds that the people have little or no social life. It opens social rooms and organizes clubs and societies.

"The people have little legitimate amusement. It organizes dancing classes and dramatic clubs.

"They are ignorant of household economics. It organizes cooking and sewing classes.

"The boys and girls are getting no industrial training. It opens industrial classes and trade schools.

"They have few books and papers. It opens reading rooms and libraries.

"The new church tries to meet every need in the lives of the people around it. When, as in the case of Berkeley Temple in Boston, it is surrounded by a large boarding house population of young men and women who have come in from the country, these needs are chiefly educational and social.

"When, as with the Jersey City Tabernacle, the surrounding population consists largely of men engaged in manual labor, the demand is mostly for baths and recreation. In a thoroughly mixed population the institutional church tries to meet the multifarious needs of a whole community.

"St. Bartholomew's of this city is the most notable example of the latter. Fifteen years ago it had one Sunday school, with about forty pupils and six or eight teachers. To-day it has six Sunday schools, two in English, one in German, one in Swedish, one in Armenian and one in Chinese, with an enrollment of nearly 2,000, and 111 officers and teachers.

"Fifteen years ago, when it was an old line, conventional church, it had no industrial schools, no guilds, no clubs, no kindergartens, no employment bureau, no loan association, no clinic, no girls' boarding house—no practical work at all but one little benevolent society. Last year the fifty surgeons and physicans of its staff treated over 13,000 patients in its clinic.

"Its kindergartens enrolled nearly 300 children. Its employment bureau found places for over 5,000 persons. Its loan association lent out in small sums between eighty and ninety thousand dollars, and its various clubs had a combined membership of more than three thousand.

"Meetings connected with its work, social, educational and religious, average thirty-two a day on week days, and eighteen on Sunday. They believe in making Sunday a day of rest, you see.

"They have Sunday services in German, Swedish, Armenian and Chinese, and surpliced choirs of each nationality render music in each language. Sunday school classes are taught in Syriac, Armenian and Turkish.

"Do you know how they came to start the roof garden on the top of the nine story parish house? A little girl threw her doll, her only doll, on to a moving railroad train which was passing beneath her. When questioned, she said she did it because she wanted her doll to see the country. That remark eventually brought lilac bushes and syringas, honeysuckles and morning glories to the roof of St. Bartholomew's.

"They have 250 children in the kindergarten, and it is said that the public school teachers in that vicinity can spot a child immediately that has come from the parish house kindergarten, and also that these children go through the primary grades usually in one or two years less time than other children roundabout.

"Their girls' club of 900 members has a mutual benefit fund which has sent sick girls to Saranac and other sanitariums, and a girls' boarding house which is always filled.

"The boys' club has 900 members. It has a dancing class, a debating class, drum, fife and bugle classes, a baseball nine, a football team, a battalion of three companies, a summer camp, a circulating library, and it gave a play last year.

"All this work is typical of the institutional church in general. It branches out in different directions, according to the needs of the community.

"The Baptist Temple in Philadelphia is one of the most remarkable. It conducts the unique Temple College, with thirty-two courses, from the kindergarten to the highest college grades, besides the law school and theological seminary, all conducted at hours and prices suited to the needs of the working masses. It has a yearly attendance of over four thousand.

"The church also conducts a hospital, which treats 6,000 cases a year.

"The Fourth Avenue Baptist Church of Pittsburg has a visiting nurse, a deaf department, a Red Cross auxiliary, and what I think is the only toy mission in the world.

"In Buffalo the Westminster Presbyterian Church has a splendid social settlement, a diet kitchen, a summer camp, a public playground, a men's clubhouse, industrial classes, a choral society, a resident nurse, a kindergarten, and clubs and classes galore, besides supporting a hospital in Persia.

"St. Stephen's, in St. Louis, has a clothing department, kitchen, laundry, gymnasium and baths, vacation playground and library. The Ninth Street Baptist Church of Cincinnati has seven chapels, at each one of which institutional work is carried on.

"Its nine buildings are open day and night, and it holds over eighty different services a week, one for deaf mutes. They have a hospital and ice water fountain, gymnasiums for women and men, 500 girls in the sewing school, 500 pupils in the singing classes.

"All this is city work. But here is an example of what the institutional church can do in a small village for Americans of the old stock, if you please, who need waking up more than factory populations and city slums, sometimes.

"In North Brookfield, Mass., there were, about a dozen years ago, 2,500 Protestants, divided among three churches, all moving sedately along the old lines. The Union Church, Congregational, was, I think, the smallest of these.

"The pastor thought and pondered a long time before beginning institutional work. It seemed a prodigious departure.

"Finally he invited all voters to meet in his church vestry for the discussion of the interests of the community. The result was the formation of the Enterprise Club, which met fortnightly to discuss subjects connected with the general welfare.

"Among the topics specially emphasized were the municipal ownership of public works, good roads, music in the public schools, electric lights, a village system of waterworks, and public spirit on the part of people with money and without children. Later, boys' and girls' clubs were formed, and a historical society, for the study of the surrounding region, rich in colonial and revolutionary lore.

"Now for the results:

"Four years after the formation of the first club, North Brookfield had put music into its public schools; the town had put in a $200,000 system of waterworks; a free public library and reading room, costing $40,000, had been erected by citizens of the community having no children; and a church specially adapted to institutional work had been built at a cost of $60,000.

"In this church are a remarkably fine and complete gymnasium and a night school in which seven different nationalities are instructed. Isn't that an example of what the Americans of a small country town can do to make 'Thy kingdom come on earth,' once they are touched with the inspiration for social betterment?

"Now, as for statistical results in a city. The Miami Association in Ohio includes the Baptist churches of Cincinnati and its vicinity, twenty-three in all. Two of these, the Ninth Street and the Lincoln Park, are institutional. The other twenty-one are the old-time churches.

"The two institutional churches are downtown, subject to all the disadvantages which have driven out so many Protestant churches from such regions. In one year recently, out of 325 additions to these twenty-three churches on confession of faith, 209 were received by these two institutional churches.

"In numbers, 3 of the churches stood still that year, 11 lost, the remaining 9 gained 271 members. Of those 271, 181 were gained by the two institutional churches.

"The membership of those two churches is 37 per cent. of the entire association membership. Their church property is 35 per cent. of the entire church property. And neither of the two has more wealthy members than a number of the other twenty-one. Those two churches made 66 per cent. of the gains of that association of twenty-three churches in that year.

"Such results have been almost appalling to advocates of the old line system. So much so that the methods are now followed by many churches which would not call themselves institutional churches.

"In Manhattan and The Bronx 112 out of 488 Protestant churches were reported two or three years ago as having one or more forms of institutional work in progress. Five have settlement work, 32 fresh air work, 1 a bowling alley, 1 a billiard room, 1 a tailor shop; 2 have athletic clubs, 5 amusement societies, 7 baths, 2 swimming pools, 18 gymnasiums, 8 dispensaries, 2 dispensaries and clinics, 1 a medical aid society, 2 hospitals, 2 loan associations, 2 woodyards, 2 coal clubs, 21 employment societies, 27 penny provident banks, 4 lodging houses, 17 day nurseries, 1 an ice-water fountain, 1 a soup booth, 3 coffee booths, 4 flower missions, 3 flower and fruit missions, 1 a legal aid society, 1 a civic club, 1 a trade school, 2 night schools, 3 manual training schools, 1 an art students' club of 175 members, 10 cooking schools, 10 kitchen gardens, 40 kindergartens, 44 sewing schools, 48 industrial schools, 20 libraries and 25 reading rooms.

"The institutional church is distinctly Protestant, as it is distinctively American.

"Out of 56 synagogues reported in Manhattan and The Bronx at the same time the following lines of work were reported: One reading room, 1 library, 3 kindergartens, 1 industrial school, 2 day nurseries. These were scattered among 4 synagogues.

"Out of 103 Catholic churches 8 have forms of institutional work, including 2 reading rooms, 8 libraries, 2 athletic unions, 2 kindergartens and 1 day nursery.

WAIL OF THE OLD RIVERMAN.

An old Ohio River steamboat man sat on the upper deck of a Sound steamer as she pulled out of her berth.

"This part of the country," he said, "is the only section where steamboating continues to be successful. It is singular to me that a business which was such a power forty or fifty years ago should have dwindled to nothing in the country which it helped to build up.

"Only a few days ago in Cincinnati a wharfboat was anchored for the river trade. I do not know when such a thing has ever happened in Cincinnati. It was quite an event. But there was a time when several wharfboats were necessary to accommodate the trade of that port.

"Thirty years ago there was a steamer every day for New Orleans, and one to arrive. Now there is not a boat of any kind in that trade.

"At that time there was a daily line of packets to Memphis. Now one boat a week leaves for that port. Then there was a daily boat to St. Louis, and one up from there. Now there is one every ten or twelve days.

"In those days I was the captain of a boat which belonged to a daily line of steamers for Nashville. Now there is not a boat in that trade.

"Then, there were four boats every day for Louisville. One boat a day is all there is in that trade now.

"The four boats that used to leave for Louisville daily were always crowded with fashionable throngs. Few passengers travel on the one boat that now plies between the two ports, and they are of the poorer class.

"There were also four boats a day for Madison, then a sprightly city. Now there is one boat a day, and that is of the cheaper sort. There was a daily line of steamers then between Cincinnati and Pittsburg. It is a rare thing when there are more than two a week now.

"It is a common saying that railroads killed the river trade. It is true of the rivers in the middle West, but why is it not true of the East? Your piers are crowded with palatial steamers—I do not mean ocean steamers, but boats that do only river trade—and they are always crowded, and their freight traffic is enormous.

"Some one told me that they run in connection with railroads—that there is a combine. Well, why, if that is true, is there no similar combine on the rivers of the middle West?

"The decadence of the trade on the Ohio, the Mississippi and the Missouri is pathetic to one who has seen it in its glory as I have. I do not understand it."

GRIST FOR THE LAWYERS' MILL.

There are 2,000,000 civil suits brought in this country every year. If the plaintiffs were different in every case, one in eight of the voting population could be said to be a litigant. As it is, the actual number of different litigants is not in excess of 800,000—400,000 plaintiffs and 400,000 defendants—which is 1 per cent. of the total population of the country, now about 80,000,000.

The number of lawsuits brought in a year in France is 800,000.

In Italy—Italians are much inclined to litigation—it is 1,400,000, and in Germany it is 3,000,000, a very much larger number, both actually and relatively, than the number in the United States.

Civil actions of all kinds begun last year in Great Britain and Ireland numbered about 1,500,000, or one for nearly every tenth male or female adult in the United Kingdom. In 1902 there was an increase of nearly 62,000 over the previous year, and 472,041 actions were heard out of 1,410,484 that were begun.

Of the number of appeal cases heard, one in every three was successful, against one in four or five, years ago. The total cost of British litigation in 1903 was placed at $7,809,875.

The best measure of litigation is usually the number of laws or statutes, and not, contrary to general belief, the number of lawyers. In this country it is found generally to be the case that the largest amount of litigation does not originate among Americans, but among newcomers here, who appeal to the courts for the adjudication of matters of trifling account. In no other country in the world are there so many damage suits brought as there are in the United States.